

Five whys?

Purpose

A tool to engage participants in deep thinking about a topic.

Process

- Distribute the five whys resource sheet or ask participants to create one (see over).
- Participants write the 'Why?' question at the top of the sheet.
- Participants answer the question by writing their response underneath.
- Participants then ask 'Why?' of their response and write the second response.
- This process is repeated at least five times or until a 'root' understanding of the initial question is reached.
- Individual sheets may be shared, displayed or discussed.

An example of the five whys?

Why do we need to breathe air to stay alive?

Answer: To get oxygen into our lungs.

Why do we have to get oxygen into our lungs?

Answer: So that our lungs can pass the oxygen into our blood stream.

Why do our lungs need to pass oxygen into our blood stream?

Answer: So that all of our cells can be supplied with oxygen.

Why do all our cells need a supply of oxygen?

Answer: So that the oxygen can combine with the food that we eat to give us energy.

Why do we need energy?

Answer: We need energy to keep our bodies moving and living.

Product

The five whys? allows for deep individual reflection with a documented result.

PrimaryConnections examples

- Why is science important in the primary school?
- Why are science investigations important in primary science?
- Why is scientific literacy a high priority for all citizens?

References

Bicheno, John (1994). *The Quality 50: A Guide to Gurus, Tools, Wastes, Techniques & Systems*. Victoria: Nestadt.
Langford, David (2003). *Tool Time, Choosing and Implementing Quality Improvement Tools*. USA: Langford International Inc.

Five whys?

Question 1	Why
Answer 1	
Question 2	Why
Answer 2	
Question 3	Why
Answer 3	
Question 4	Why
Answer 4	
Question 5	Why
Answer 5	